

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20

EB-11 IGA-02 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /129 W

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P R 161612Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0361

DOD WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 1777

DOD FOR JCS, CNO, ISA, DIA, OP 63

ARA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, EC

SUBJ: HEAD OF ECUADOREAN NAVY AGREES TO DEFER PURCHASE OF SHIPS
FROM NON-US SOURCES PENDING OUR FURTHER REVIEW OF THE MATTER

REF: QUITO 1710

1. ACCOMPANIED BY NAVATT ZINSLER, I CALLED MARCH 15 AT MY REQUEST ON ADMIRAL SERGIO VASQUEZ PACHECO, COMMENDER, ECUADOREAN NAVY (EN). I TOLD HIM NAVATT HAD REPORTED TO ME HIS "DISGUST" WITH THE RESULTS OF HIS TRIP TO WASHINGTON (SEE REFTEL) AND WISHED TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT WITH HIM IN DETAIL.

2. ADMIRAL VASQUEZ REPLIED THAT "DISGUST" WAS TOO STRONG A WORD, DISAPPOINTMENT WAS WHAT HE FELT. HE THEN PROCEEDED TO EXPLAIN IN A DISPASSIONATE BUT OBVIOUSLY DEEPLY FELT WAY THE POSITION HE FOUND HIMSELF IN. AS HEAD OF ECUADOR'S NAVY, HE HAD THE DUTY TO INSURE THAT THE EN COULD MEET ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. AT PRESENT HE HAD ABSOLUTELY NO
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SEAWORTHY SHIPS, NOT EVEN ENOUGH TO PARTICIPATE IN

TRAINING EXERCISES. HE HAD TO ACQUIRE SOME. HE WAS NOT SEEKING TO BUILD UP A BIG NAVY OR ONE THAT WOULD EVER HAVE ANYTHING BIGGER THAN A DESTROYER: "ONE OR TWO SUBMARINES", SEVERAL DESTROYERS, SOME PATROL BOATS, THAT WAS ALL HE WAS TRYING TO GET. THERE WAS A LONG LEAD TIME--ALMOST FOUR YEARS--INVOLVED IN NEW CONSTRUCTION: THE NAVY'S SITUATION WAS NOT LIKE THAT OF THE ARMY, WHICH COULD PROCURE ITS EQUIPMENT WITH RELATIVE EASE, OR EVEN LIKE THAT OF THE AIR FORCE, WHICH HAD PERHAPS A TWO YEAR LEAD TIME.

3. IN THE PAST, ADMIRAL VASQUEZ CONTINUED, THE EN HAD RELIED ON THE UNITED STATES FOR ITS SUPPLIES AND ITS TRAINING. IT STILL PREFERRED TO DO SO BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVE EASE OF SUPPLY, THE AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATE TRAINING, AND THE FACT THAT MANY OF EN OFFICERS SPEAK ENGLISH. BECAUSE OF THE NAVY'S IDENTIFICATION IN THE AMERICAN MIND WITH THE FISHING PROBLEM, ALMOST NO HELP HAD BEEN FORTHCOMING IN RECENT YEARS. HE HAD THOUGHT THAT WITH THE IMPROVEMENT WHICH HAD TAKEN PLACE IN US/ECUADOREAN RELATIONS AND WITH THE ABSENCE OF SEIZURES FOR A YEAR, THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOW BE WILLING TO PROVIDE SOME SHIPS TO ECUADOR. HE WAS THUS DOUBLY DISAPPOINTED TO FIND THAT WHEN HE WAS IN WASHINGTON ON THE VERY ANNIVERSARY OF A YEAR WITHOUT FISHING BOAT SEIZURES THAT THE USG WAS STILL UNPREPARED TO ASSIST THE EN. HE WAS NOT PERSUADED, ADMIRAL VASQUEZ CONTINUED, THAT THE US DID NOT HAVE SHIPS IT COULD MAKE AVAILABLE. HE HAD BEEN IN BRAZIL RECENTLY AND HAD SEEN THAT THEY HAD JUST ACQUIRED FOUR DESTROYERS AND HE KNEW THAT SHIPS WERE GOING TO CHILE AND PERU. (I OMIT FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY ADMIRAL VASQUEZ' TRENCHANT COMMENTS ON COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE MADE MAJOR ARMS PURCHASES WHICH THEN LAUNCH PROPOSALS FOR A MORATORIUM ON ARMS PURCHASES.) GIVEN WHAT WAS OBVIOUSLY THE CONTINUED UNWILLINGNESS OF THE USG TO ASSIST THE EN, HE HAD TO BUY EQUIPMENT FROM WHATEVER SOURCES HE COULD IN ORDER TO DISCHARGE HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS COMMANDER OF THE NAVY. HE COULD WAIT NO LONGER.

4. IN REPLYING TO ADMIRAL VASQUEZ, I OUTLINED THE CHANGES
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WHICH HAD OCCURRED UNDER SECRETARY KISSINGER'S DIRECTION IN RECENT MONTHS IN US POLICY IN THE HEMISPHERE IN GENERAL AND TOWARD ECUADOR IN PARTICULAR; RECOUNTED MY CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA ON JANUARY 29; DETAILED THE STEPS WE HAD UNILATERALLY TAKEN TO IMPROVE OUR RELATIONS WITH ECUADOR; AND EXPLAINED THAT I WAS FULLY AWARE OF THE DISAPPOINTING NATURE OF THE USG REPLY TO HIS REQUESTS BUT SAID THAT I WAS SEEKING FURTHER

REVIEW OF THIS MATTER IN THE LIGHT OF CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. I EXPLAINED OUR SHORTAGE OF SHIPS AND THE LEAD TIME WHICH WAS REQUIRED TO PROGRAM THEM. REFERRING TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY KUBISCH' VISIT HERE AT THE SECRETARY'S REQUEST, I TOLD ADMIRAL VASQUEZ OF MR. KUBISCH' CALL ON PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA (SEE QUITO 1666), OF OUR PROPOSAL TO BEGIN FISHING TALKS, AND OF THE HOPE EXPRESSED BY MR. KUBISCH TO THE PRESIDENT THAT ECUADOR WOULD NOT GO AHEAD WITH PLANS FOR SHIP PROCUREMENT FROM NON-US SOURCES UNTIL WE HAD HAD AN ADDITIONAL TIME TO REVIEW THE MATTER. I TOLD ADMIRAL VASQUEZ SPECIFICALLY THAT, WHILE OBVIOUSLY NEITHER THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY NOR I COULD MAKE ANY PROMISES, WE BOTH WERE SEEKING TO HAVE THE SUBJECT OF SHIPS FOR ECUADOR FAVORABLY REVIEWED. I ASKED ADMIRAL VASQUEZ TO DEFER DECISION ON SHIP PROCURMENT FROM NON-US SOURCES UNTIL THE END OF APRIL. HE REPLIED AFTER SOME HESITATION THAT HE WOULD DEFER A DECISION AND WOULD HOPE FOR A FAVORABLE OUTCOME.

5. COMMENT: ADMIRAL VASQUEZ DID NOT SPECIFICALLY AGREE TO WAIT UNTIL THE END OF APRIL. MY BEST JUDGMENT IS THAT HE WILL WAIT UNTIL APPROXIMATELY APRIL 15 BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH PLANS TO ACQUIRE DESTROYERS OR DESTROYER-ESCORTS FROM OTHER (PROBABLY UK) SOURCES AND THUS EFFECTIVELY SHUTTING THE DOOR TO THE RESUMPTION OF USN/EN COOPERATION.
BREWSTER

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